

Formative Feedback

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Formative Assessment Modules

- Module 1: Overview of Formative Assessment
- Module 2: Assessment Systems
- Module 3: Learning Progressions and Learning Goals
- Module 4: Planning Formative Assessment
- Module 5: Differentiating Instruction
- Module 6: Feedback
- Module 7: Student involvement
- Module 8: Changes in Practice

Question 1.

What is formative feedback?

- (a) Praise and encouragement
- (b) Grades
- (c) Information about what was incorrect
- (d) Information on how to improve
- (e) All of the above

Module 6

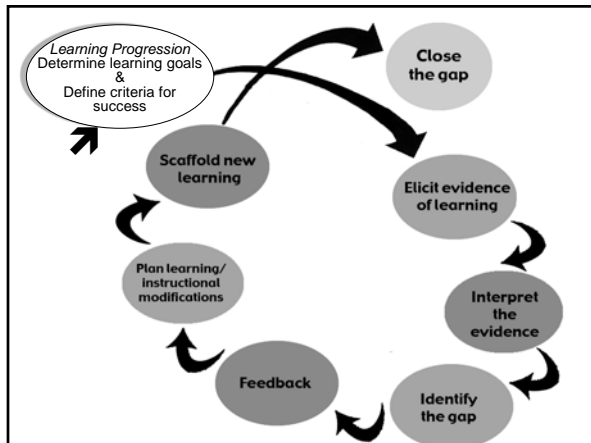


Learning Goal:

- Gain an understanding of formative feedback
- Consider approaches to providing feedback

Success Criteria:

- I can explain (to a colleague) the criteria for determining whether feedback is formative
- I can evaluate the quality of feedback
- I can select appropriate formative assessment strategies to support student learning



Locating Feedback in Formative Assessment



One description of formative assessment is that it is

"students and teachers using evidence of learning to adapt teaching and learning to meet immediate learning needs minute-to-minute and day-by-day" (ETS, 2007).

... using evidence to adjust ...

... teacher role and student role

... feedback supports students' adjustment

Another Way to Think About Feedback



- ◉ In a classroom students and teachers interact all the time: questions, discussions, presentations etc.
- ◉ Feedback is another form of an interaction
- ◉ In this module we'll focus on the feedback *from* a teacher to students rather than the feedback that a teacher might receive

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Classroom Contract or The Chicken and the Egg



Research shows that facilitating learning opportunities based on knowledge of student understanding or misunderstanding, can change the classroom contract for both students and teachers.

As the change occurs, students understand that intelligence is malleable and are therefore more likely to share their thinking in public without embarrassment, value understanding and collaboration, and value unique solution strategies.

The shift also helps redefine the teacher's job from one focused on relaying information to one focused on facilitating learning. (Lyon & Leusner, 2009)

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Student View



I love their feedback. It's strong and it really helps you improve with everything you do. It's a lot better than when they would tell you "It's wrong, go back and do it again" and at that point I didn't know what I was doing so I don't see how could I go back and do it again if I got it wrong the first time



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Feedback: Timing and Opportunity Matter

Thorough but nothing extra.

Total Mark:9.....

Good description of events. More analysis would have helped.

Total Mark:5.....

Good attempt to put self in other position

Total Mark:7.....

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Overview



- Research on feedback
- Examples of feedback for review and a poll
- Classroom Issues
 - Finding time to give feedback
 - Finding time for students to respond to feedback
 - Classroom contract considerations
 - Approaches to maximize feedback opportunities

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5 Research Studies



Black and William's 1998 review of research identified a number of important studies that shed light on what makes feedback effective

1. Butler, 1988
2. Butler, 1987
3. Simmons, M. and Cope, P., 1993
4. Day, J. D. and Cordon, L. A., 1993
5. Kluger, A. N. and DeNisi, A., 1996


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1. Comments vs. Scores


Type of Feedback	Scores on later tasks	Attitude to further learning
Scores	No improvement	Top: Positive Bottom: Negative
Comments	30% gain	All positive
Comments and scores		



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What was Outcome with Both Comments and Scores?


a) Gain: 30%; Attitude – all: positive
b) Gain: 30%; Attitude – top: positive, bottom: negative
c) Gain: 0%; Attitude – all: positive
d) Gain: 0%; Attitude – top: positive, bottom: negative
e) Something else



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2: Focusing on Task Involvement


	Achievement	Task-Involvement	Ego-Involvement
Written Comments	High	High	Low
Grades	Low	Low	High
Written Praise	Low	Low	High
No Feedback	Low	Low	Low



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3: Time to Grapple with a Problem


- A study of geometry students, half worked with paper and pencil and half used a computer program.
 - Paper & Pencil: Students had to carefully consider their first version and revisions before being given feedback learned more.
 - Computer program: Students able to eye-ball and use trial and error strategies essentially got feedback too easily and easily learned less.



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4: Too Much Feedback

- Class 1 given "scaffolded" response: learned more, retained information longer
- Class 2 given a complete solution when stuck and a new problem
- Developing skills of "minimal intervention" promotes better learning.
- Feedback needs to make students think, not just give them the right answer




5: A Meta Analysis

- An extensive review identified 130 well-designed research studies found that on average feedback does improve performance
- There were substantial differences between studies
 - Feedback that provided specific details about how to improve, improved performance.

BUT

- Praise (feedback focused on self-esteem or self-image) made performance worse than no feedback at all




In Summary

Effective Feedback:	Ineffective Feedback
• Provides specific details about how to improve	• Combines grades and comments together
• Is focused on the task, not the individual	• Focuses on praise
• Allows students to grapple with the problem first	• Is given too soon
• Is "just enough"	• Takes the thinking away from the learner



Questions/Comments


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Putting it into Action

- Focuses on the task not the student
- Causes students to think in language they can understand
- Recipe for future action
- Can be actually used by students to make improvements


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Grading Work vs. Marking Work

- Grading: Students are finished with an assignment or unit once they receive a grade. This is generally done for a summative purpose.
- Marking: Students use feedback as a way of reviewing work to improve learning. This is generally done for a formative purpose.

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Feedback Example - 1


“This is generally fine, but you are mixing up the terms ‘particle,’ ‘element’ and ‘compound.’ Look at the glossary we made and use it to check through this piece again.”

Question: Example 1 of Feedback:

- (a) Focuses on the task not the student
- (b) Causes students to think in language they can understand
- (c) Recipe for future action
- (d) Can be actually used by students to make improvements


Comments

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Feedback Example - 2


"You seem to know what 'self-pollination' is, and you can distinguish between this and 'cross-pollination.' Can you suggest why a plant would self-pollinate? Could this be an advantage?"

Question: Example 2 of Feedback :

- (a) Focuses on the task not the student
- (b) Causes students to think in language they can understand
- (c) Recipe for future action
- (d) Can be actually used by students to make improvements


Comments

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Feedback Example - 3


"Although you've used a green traffic light on everything – and I don't doubt your confidence with it – you need to include more scientific words and phrases in your answers."

Question: Example 3 of Feedback :

- (a) Focuses on the task not the student
- (b) Causes students to think in language they can understand
- (c) Recipe for future action
- (d) Can be actually used by students to make improvements


Comments

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Feedback Example - 4

"There are two key aspects that you need to work on. You must show all your work so that we both know you understand all the stages to get the answers. Also, you must keep up with the work in class even if you have to finish it at home."


Question: Example 4 of Feedback :

- (a) Focuses on the task not the student
- (b) Causes students to think in language they can understand
- (c) Recipe for future action
- (d) Can be actually used by students to make improvements


Comments

Examples from ETS, 2007
Keeping Learning on Track™ Program

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Classroom Issues: Time for Feedback

- Select the pieces of work will provide most benefit to students if feedback is provided
 - Not every piece of work lends itself to rich comments
 - Better do it less frequently and well
- What might not get done? Identify trade-offs

Post comments with examples of what you might consider a trade-off in order to find time for more feedback.


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Classroom Issues: Time for Students to Respond

- Students' beliefs about themselves as learners will impact their response to feedback (Cowie, 2005)
- If comments are provided by the teacher, but students do not have time to read them/use them, it was wasted effort.
- Responding to the comments may draw on other strategies – using peers as resources to provide a sounding board for next steps, groups of students working together to compare work etc.

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Classroom Issues: Feedback Ideas

Find and Fix: Rather than providing a grade or overall number correct/incorrect, the teacher tells students how many errors there are in a paper, page, paragraph, or problem. The teacher does not tell students them explicitly where or what the errors are. The students must find and correct their own errors and resubmit the work.

Feedback cards: For a specific task, the teacher identifies several common weaknesses across student responses. She writes comments to address each weakness on a small card and photocopies the cards. When evaluating all student work, she attaches the appropriate card(s) and comment to the student work. This technique provides quality comments to all students while minimizing the amount of writing the teacher must do.

Technique examples from ETS, 2009
Keeping Learning on Track™ Program

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Feedback Ideas (cont.)

Comment only marking: The teacher provides only comments – no grades – on student work, in order to get students to focus on how to improve their learning. The comments are specific to the qualities of the work, designed to promote thinking, and to provide clear guidance (a recipe for action) on what to do to improve. The teacher provides established structures and time for students to revise and improve the work based upon the comments.

Reach for the Next Level: Students identify areas of improvement in their own work by comparing their assignments to exemplars at the next level of achievement. With advanced students, this technique allows the teacher to find room for improvement, no matter how good the original is. Students find out for themselves that they need to set higher standards.


Technique examples from ETS, 2009
Keeping Learning on Track™ Program

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Questions/Comments

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Reflection for Next Steps

- How has what you have learned so far in this course changed your thinking about formative assessment?
- How will that change your classroom practice or your role in supporting teachers.

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Contact Information



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